

MOTOR VEHICULAR CRASH RATES IN TENNESSEE, 1990-2000³⁴

- A total of 176,799 highway crashes occurred in Tennessee in 2000, with about 29% resulting in injury or fatality (n=51,937).
- Total crash rates in Tennessee rose from 2,876 per 100,000 population in 1990 to 3,107.6 per 100,000 in 2000. This rate represents an increase of about 8%.
- Total crash rates were about one-third (30.6%) higher in metropolitan regions (3,775.2) than in nonmetropolitan regions (2,619.7) in 2000, while injury crash rates were 22.7% higher in metropolitan regions, at 1,027 per 100,000, compared to 793.7 in nonmetropolitan regions. However, fatal crash rates were substantially higher in nonmetropolitan regions of Tennessee in 2000, at 25.2 per 100,000 population, compared to 14.5 for metropolitan regions. This situation represents a differential of 42.5% and may relate to gaps in rural access to emergency and related services.
- Counties with the highest total crash rates include Davidson (4,405.4), followed closely by Hamilton (4,021.8), Knox, Madison, and Washington Counties. Lowest total crash rates were observed for Clay, Bledsoe and Lake Counties, at 689.6, 566.0 and 465.2, respectively. Regions with the highest total crash rates were metropolitan counties that are defined as regions by TDH, especially Davidson and Hamilton Counties, as noted above, while the lowest total crash rates were for Northwest Tennessee (2089.6) and Southwest Tennessee (2220.8).
- Injury crash rates declined by 6.3% from 951.7 per 100,000 in 1990 to 892.2 in 2000. After increasing to a high point of 1004.2 in 1995, these rates have dropped dramatically.
- The highest injury crash rates in 2000 were observed for Davidson, Henderson and Knox Counties (1410.3, 1120.6, and 1116.9, respectively), while three rural counties - Clay, Bledsoe and Lake - had the lowest injury crash rates (338.5, 323.4, and 226.3, respectively). Regions with the highest injury crash rates were the metropolitan counties that are planning regions, again Davidson and Knox, while the lowest rates were in Northwest (719.5) and Northeast (734.9) Tennessee.
- Fatal crash rates, like injury crash rates, also declined but by less (3.3%), from 21.4 per 100,000 in 1990 to 20.7 in 2000, with a pattern suggesting stabilization of the rates.

³⁴Highway crash data are from the Tennessee Department of Safety and are available for on-line querying on the Health Information Tennessee Web site (www.tennessee.gov/hitspot).